



PARISH PROFILE





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STRENGTHS

As a community of faithful followers of Jesus, St. James proclaims the Gospel to a needy world; the parish is dedicated to outreach, community engagement, and the practice of Christian values.

St. James is an open, inclusive, and progressive community that welcomes individuals of all walks of life.

We gather to pray, discern and propose innovative recommendations around common topics. Many voices are represented, and a diverse membership takes an active role in the liturgy.

Parishioners benefit from the strong musical component.

A vibrant arts culture permeates both the community and the parish.



OPPORTUNITIES

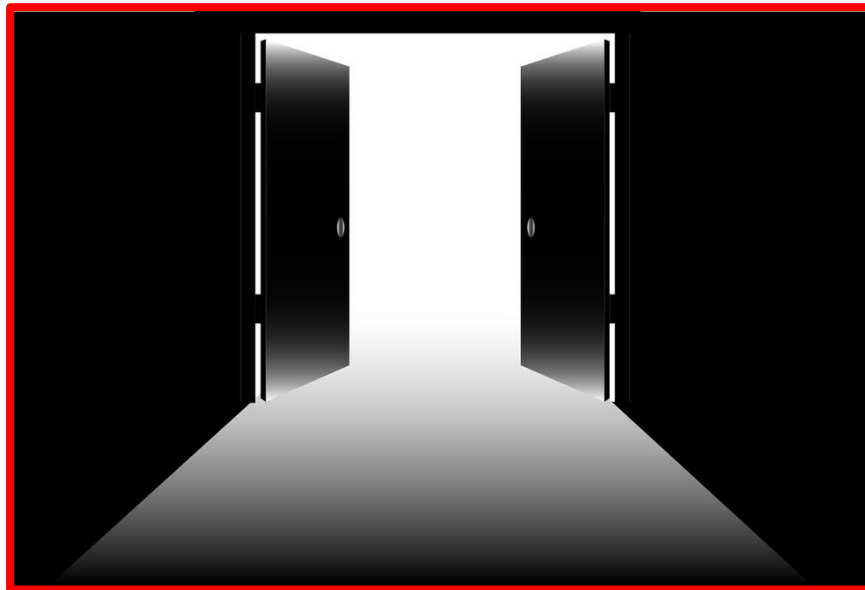
The pandemic was visualized as an opportunity to reconsider how to draw new members and keep current members active in church life. St. James has established a committee to make recommendations regarding the development of a Parish Mission Action Plan, based on Adult Faith Formation, reshaping parish culture to enable Ministry and the fullness of life for our community.

The church's strength in outreach provides a wonderful opportunity to show alignment with young families and younger individuals seeking connection to the community and a mechanism to making a difference for others.

St. James' commitment to environmental concerns and social justice provides an opportunity to grow the congregation and involve the greater community.

The size and versatility of the church building provides an opportunity to become a neighbourhood hub by offering a variety of programming and events.

The church could generate revenue through increased rental contracts for movie and musical productions.



CHALLENGES



Like many churches, the congregation of St. James is ageing. Sustainable finances are a challenge as the number of active parishioners decreases. A gap in membership exists between parishioners who are near or at retirement age, and those who have a young family. As a result, we must consider how the church will continue to thrive in the mid and long terms.

Our building requires regular maintenance and improvements to meet the changing needs of our parishioners and the community.

The secular culture (especially among younger people) provides a challenge to growing the church.



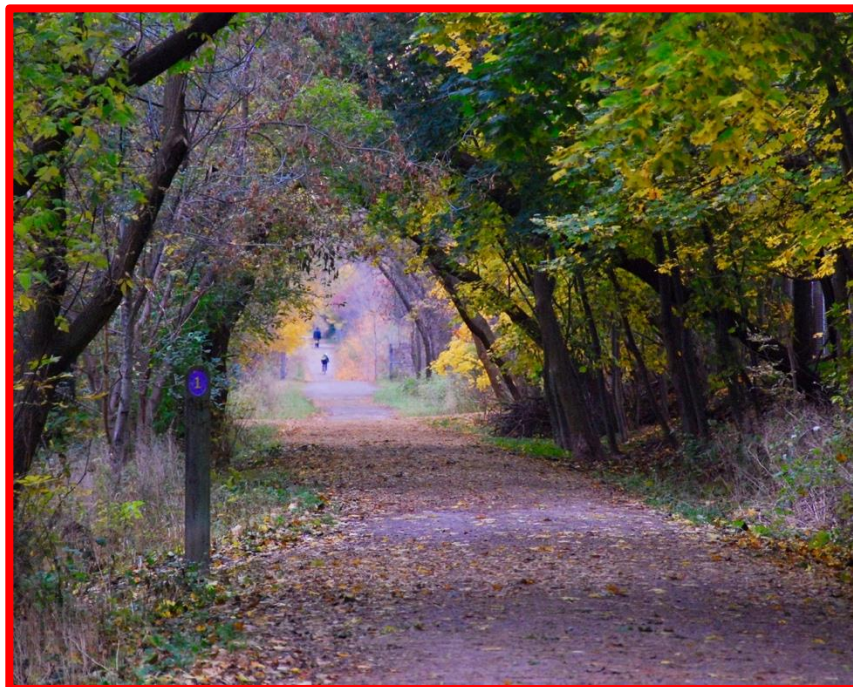
OUR COMMUNITIES

St. James' Anglican Church is located in Dundas, Ontario - the "Valley Town". Dundas is located at the western end of Lake Ontario, adjacent to the Niagara Escarpment, a World Heritage site and with easy access to Toronto and the Niagara Peninsula. The town was originally industrial in function but is now a vibrant suburban community within the City of Hamilton with its first class educational and medical facilities.

McMaster University and several organizations (e.g. the Dundas Valley School of Art, Carnegie Gallery) have generated an "artsy" feel; the historic downtown is often used for filming purposes. The population has remained stable at approximately 25 000 for several years with expansion limited by the Niagara Escarpment, waterways (Cootes Paradise) and the surrounding conservation areas.

The church is located in a thriving, diverse residential neighbourhood with most income brackets, professions and lifestyles represented. St. James is near the walkable, and bike-able downtown and is proximate to protected conservation areas, hiking trails, and waterfalls, as well as the Royal Botanical Gardens.

The parish family of St. James is a liberal and eclectic congregation, consisting of approximately 175 households with 235 adults and 30 children. As with most main-line churches, the parish has an older demographic than that of the community but does have some very engaged young families.



WORSHIP

St. James is known for its creative liturgical tradition and focus on outreach.

Average Sunday attendance prior to COVID-19 was approximately 100 people (two services). Currently, (February 2022), all services are on-line. These include one Sunday Service, a mid-week service and Compline one evening each week.

St. James is fortunate to have 2 Honorary Clergy and an ordained Parish Deacon; these individuals contribute to the worship service either as celebrant or homilist. Monthly services are offered in various care facilities and the provision of Holy Communion is provided to those who cannot physically attend when requested.




St. James has a long musical tradition. The parish choir has 12 regular singers with guest singers expanding its resources as needed. The St. Cecilia singers has between 5 – 10 young choristers (Pre-COVID).

Organ Recital series are held during Advent and Lenten seasons, with recitalists from South Western Ontario and Toronto. Our 3 manual Pipe Organ has divisions of the organ distributed in the four corners of the Sanctuary and there is a lovely Grand Piano.



COVID spacing for worship



MOST ENGAGING POSTS			
	The tradition is back! November 3	Reach	1.3K
		Engagements	151
	The Prayerground November 2021 November 8	Reach	168
		Engagements	70
	Wednesday Night Prayer: Compline on October 20, 2021 October 20	Reach	160
		Engagements	62

Sample Facebook statistics for worship and events

REACHING OUT TO THE WORLD

The Gospel calls us to work to change unjust structures and help the marginalized and the poor. This is a major part of the parish DNA. Members are passionate about helping others, actively supporting those in need locally, nationally and internationally.

Winter coats (650 this year) provide support the ongoing effort to help those in need. On a weekly basis, St. James plays host to a community dinner. Local churches rotate the responsibility of providing hot, tasty and nutritious meals with each congregation providing one dinner per month.

For over 50 years, St. James has participated in the Association of Dundas Churches, a group of congregations who work together to meet community needs. In addition to an Advent Walk and Lenten Lunches, the group has sponsored and supported a number of events including forums on poverty and pre-election all-candidates meetings. Other programs supported by the parish include the Routes Youth Program, Meals on Wheels, the Truth and Reconciliation Committee and Good Food Boxes.

St. James has been active in a deepening understanding of local and global social justice needs, particularly in the area of climate change. The parish is recognized for its leadership in environmental areas in the Diocese and is a strong supporter of St. Matthew's House – a Diocesan-based agency serving those in need in Hamilton.

Motivated by the mission of Jesus, the parish family actively proclaims the love of Christ through justice, outreach ... and action. The parish sponsored a large Syrian refugee family and continue with refugee assistance on a regular basis. Parishioners and the larger community have assisted government-sponsored refugees and sent 2 containers of medical supplies to Kurdistan.



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND FORMATION

For Adults Education programs include Education for Ministry, Men's Spirituality and short-term seasonal programs and Bible studies. The writers' group and poetry group meet monthly, but both have been in hiatus during COVID-19. There is an annual women's retreat.

For youth ... Prior to COVID-19, a youth group was in its early stages of regeneration. The goal was to engage young people who had "graduated" from the Sunday School Program in activities more appropriate for their age group. A room in the lower level has been designed and equipped for their needs. Plans are underway to restart when guidelines permit.



For Children...The St. James Sunday School lessons and activities bring Bible stories to life for St. James' younger members. A typical (pre-COVID) Sunday would involve 8-10 children. Special events such as the Christmas pageant bring that number up significantly. During COVID-19, contact with more than 25 of our younger members has been regular, innovative and appreciated.

OUR PARISH HOME - THE BUILDING

The church is a warm, welcoming and well-maintained space. The original structure, built in 1924, was renovated following a fire in 1978. The church maintains a fresh and modern feel while preserving key historical features. The stained-glass windows destroyed by the fire were replaced with clear glass that allows natural light in - and our thoughts to migrate out to the community and its needs. An effective use of “greenery”, rotating art exhibits, and natural light complete the sanctuary space. New and unique flooring in the sanctuary area has enhanced the feel and improved the excellent acoustics. There are no traditional pews. Seating and the altar can be moved to accommodate a variety of orientations.

The main floor also has a cozy parlour for small groups gatherings, a large parish hall and a well-equipped kitchen, as well as the church office. Many rooms and elements of our property are available for rental and for community use.

The extensive lower level houses the St. James Pre-School which has been a fixture in the community for more than half a century and has been our tenant since its inception. The lower level also has the children’s and youth rooms, a choir room, electrical and boiler rooms and storage and open space.



The Sanctuary with new floor (COVID service with social distancing enforced).



Parlour

STEWARDSHIP INITIATIVES

With the re-activation of the Building Committee in 2020, a refreshing and updating of many areas of the church has taken place to meet current and future needs. First priorities included the maintenance needs of the boiler system, repairing damaged roofing and an updating of the fire safety equipment. A new sound system has recently been installed in the sanctuary, with capacity to be extended to other areas. A review was conducted to assess the accessibility needs of the building.

The closure for COVID-19 gave us the opportunity to refresh the youth, choir and children's rooms with new flooring, furniture, fresh paint and equipment. Hallways and doors were painted to brighten the main floor and office areas.

A fundraising initiative in 2021 provided new equipment for on-line services, major lighting improvements (reducing our hydro costs and carbon footprint) and important modifications to meet the accessibility needs identified in the building review.



Children's Room



Choir Room



Rector's Office



Youth Room

THE CHALLENGE OF COVID – 19

St. James met the challenges of COVID-19 restrictions and closures with creativity, flexibility, generosity and caring. Past practices were assessed and reconfigured to engage and serve our church community during the time of the pandemic. Closure of the church building afforded the opportunity to clean, organize and refresh the building. A fundraising program has been enormously successful despite the limitations associated with the pandemic.



A communications plan was established that included a phone tree, weekly electronic mail blasts, and sociable ZOOM meetings to keep parishioners informed, engaged and involved. St. James' online presence is growing. The church Internet service was upgraded, and new equipment creates high quality on-line productions. Online Sunday Worship and Compline services have consistently high attendance, ranging from 50 to 240 viewers.

A video is posted online monthly for Church School children and accompanying activity packages are delivered to their homes.



ASPIRATIONS

With the context established in this profile, the parish family of St. James is endeavouring to fill the position of incumbent with a priest who ...

- possesses a lively trinitarian faith; a solid foundation in the Anglican tradition and a demonstrated skill in liturgy;
- possesses an ability to cast a missional vision for the future of St. James
- supports the Parish in its commitment to inclusivity, diversity and to its outreach initiatives and social justice priorities;
- engages, collaborates, and leads with an open mind and heart;
- displays warmth and compassion as an element of effective pastoral care;
- demonstrates superior communication skills and possesses a sense of humility and humour;
- will complement the strong musical foundation and love of the arts as enjoyed by the parish and community.





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